

# **Rocco B. Commisso**

## **NIAF Lifetime Achievement Award**



Rocco Commisso's illustrious career in the cable television industry spans nearly three decades. He is the chairman and chief executive officer of Mediacom Communications Corporation, a company he founded in 1995 in the basement of his home to acquire and reinvigorate cable systems in the nation's underserved smaller communities. Within seven years from initial operations, Rocco and his dedicated management team engineered Mediacom's dramatic growth into the nation's eighth largest cable operator with annual revenues exceeding \$1 billion. With its corporate offices in Middletown, NY and 4,200 employees in 24 states, Mediacom is the leading provider of advanced broadband services to 1.4 million customers in over 1,500 small towns and cities across America.

Commisso began his business career at Pfizer Inc.'s manufacturing facility in Brooklyn, NY. After graduating from business school, he spent a decade in the financial community, initially at The Chase Manhattan Bank and then at Royal Bank of Canada, where he led the bank's U.S. lending activities to companies in the media and communications sectors. From 1986 to 1995, he served as executive vice president, chief financial officer and director of Cablevision Industries Corporation. During his tenure there, privately-held Cablevision Industries grew from the 25<sup>th</sup> to the 8<sup>th</sup> largest cable company in the nation, serving over 1.3 million customers at the time of its merger with Time Warner.

Commisso is on the board of directors of the National Italian American Foundation, National Cable & Telecommunications Association, Cable Television Laboratories, Inc. and C-SPAN, and is an honorary chair of Cable Positive, the cable industry's AIDS action organization. He is the recipient of the Ernst & Young Entrepreneur of the Year Award for the Southwest Connecticut/New York Hudson Valley area, has been named the Innovator of the Year by Cablevision Magazine, and has been recognized by several other organizations and trade publications for his leadership and contributions to the cable industry.

Born in Calabria, Italy, Rocco immigrated to the United States at age 12. He earned both a bachelor of science in industrial engineering and a master's degree in business administration from Columbia University. While at Columbia, he was co-captain of the varsity soccer team and was elected president of the business school student body. In 2004, on the 250<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Columbia's founding, the school's daily newspaper listed Commisso as one of the 250 greatest alumni.

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